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C O N F I D E N T I A L ASHGABAT 001093

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STATE FOR DRL DAS BARKS-RUGGLES  
STATE ALSO FOR SCA/CEN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/10/2017  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [KDEM](#) [TX](#)  
SUBJECT: TURKMENISTAN: FM MEREDOV ASKS DRL TO POSTPONE  
VISIT

REF: ASHGABAT 1085

Classified By: CHARGE RICHARD E. HOAGLAND FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D)

SUBJECT: TURKMENISTAN: FM MEREDOV ASKS DRL TO POSTPONE VISIT

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[¶1.](#) (C) During the course of other business on October 10, Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Rashit Meredov asked Charge if the DRL DAS Barks-Ruggles delegation couldn't please postpone its visit to Ashgabat planned for October 25.

[¶2.](#) (C) Looking pained, Meredov said, "I realize we did this with your USCIRF delegation this summer, and I'm sorry to do it again. But just as with USCIRF, we want to ensure this is a positive and successful visit." He explained the entire week, October 22-27, is booked full of Independence Day public events at which all members of the government will be required to attend -- school and clinic openings, development project inspections, trips with the president to provincial capitals, speeches, parades. Meredov said, "We understand this is an important delegation, our new relationship is important to us, we want to do this right." Charge said he would convey Meredov's request to DRL DAS Barks-Ruggles.

[¶3.](#) (C) COMMENT: We understand the disruption this causes in DRL scheduling, and Washington's strong desire to see this delegation occur soon. However, we judge Meredov is sincere about the government of Turkmenistan's desire to give the DRL delegation high priority, which it will not be able to do during Independence Week. We remember November will not work for DRL travel, and ask that early December be considered for this important delegation. END COMMENT.

[¶4.](#) (U) Please advise.  
HOAGLAND